

rise and Medicare will be bankrupt in just 7 years.

Mr. Speaker, if we raise payroll taxes, as we have done 23 times in 27 years, we will force our children and grandchildren to pay more now for seniors' health care and Medicare will still go bankrupt before our children and grandchildren can retire and gain any benefits.

Mr. Speaker, we cannot wait. The problem will not go away. The only solution is to introduce choice for seniors and competition among health care providers. Choice and competition always do two things in our free enterprise system: They lower costs and improve quality.

Medicare is far too important to turn it into Medi-scare. Republicans are asking Democrats, please, join us to save and strengthen Medicare.

WAKE UP AMERICA

(Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, again I say to my colleagues and to the American people: Wake up America.

Mr. Speaker, last week President Chirac of France pushed his nuclear button and exploded 1 of 8 nuclear bombs last week that had more power than was exploded in the atom bomb in Hiroshima, Japan, 50 years ago. Later detonations are expected to follow, each with up to 10 times greater destructiveness than the Hiroshima bomb.

Maybe 10 years from now, when that island atoll in the Pacific, the Mururoa Atoll, starts sinking and nuclear contamination enters the marine food chain causing secondary fish poisoning, maybe then one day the millions of Americans living in Hawaii and the Pacific Coast States will say, "Why did no one tell us about this?"

Mr. Speaker, France has already exploded 164 nuclear bombs in this atoll. What madness. Wake up America. We may also end up the victims of French callousness by poisoning our Pacific environment.

PRESIDENT CLINTON WEIGHS IN ON FUNDAMENTAL REFORMS

(Mr. RIGGS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RIGGS. Mr. Speaker, yesterday the President convened a meeting of the bipartisan congressional leadership at the White House and he urged the Congress to get on with the task of balancing the Federal budget, reforming the welfare system, cutting taxes, particularly on middle-class families, and controlling Medicare costs.

Mr. Speaker, it is good to hear the President weigh in in this debate. Yet I predict that the response that he will get from the Congress and his party is

a stony silence. How ironic that it is going to take the new Republican majority to help this President, who as a candidate promised to end welfare as we know it and cut taxes, make good on those promises.

THE REPUBLICAN COVERT PLAN FOR MEDICARE

(Mr. DOGGETT asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DOGGETT. Mr. Speaker, "silence," we have just heard. Silence is what we have gotten when it comes to the covert Republican plan to hike the costs of Medicare for all of America's seniors.

Mr. Speaker, for months Speaker GINGRICH and cohorts have been going around behind closed doors saying to themselves, America's seniors are getting off cheap. They are just not paying enough for health care. They have got a plan, and it has been whispered in the corridors of this Capitol, to increase deductibles and increase the monthly premiums for America's seniors; to increase the costs that they have to pay if they want to stay out of the nursing home or get home health care; to increase the cost of a lab test that a doctor might have, because they think America's seniors are not paying enough for Medicare.

There are many words to describe it. Covert, secret, mysterious, concealed, hugger-muggered, veiled, tricky, latent, shrouded, suppressed, cloaked. But the best one is "wrong." It is just wrong to do this to America's seniors.

REPUBLICANS HAILED FOR THEIR EFFORTS ON MEDICARE

(Mr. HOKE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. HOKE. Mr. Speaker, I hope the gentleman from Texas [Mr. DOGGETT], my colleague and good friend, the previous speaker, had a chance to read the Washington Post editorial yesterday on the Medicare or Medi-scare debate.

The liberal paper of record applauds Republicans because we have "forcefully taken the right position on the basic issue of controlling costs" and it chides the Democrats, like my good friend from Texas, for not playing a "constructive part in the Medicare debate."

Boy, they could not have gotten it better and more right on point. It says, "The Democrats denounce the Republicans for proposing to gut the programs, but they have no serious counterproposal; not the Democrats in Congress and not the President either."

It continues, "They," the Democrats, "risk squandering for political reasons a chance to tame these programs that everyone agrees need to be tamed. What if they chose to help instead of

using the issue to score political points?"

That is the liberal Washington Post speaking. How about it, my Democrat colleagues. How about it my friend from Texas. Why not put an end to this partisan posturing and join us in an effort to save Medicare from bankruptcy.

SECRET MEDICARE PLAN

(Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, it is refreshing to hear the Republican majority quote the Washington Post. I am more concerned about the Houston Chronicle than I am the Washington Post.

Republican Medicare cuts in growth \$270 billion to pay for a \$245 billion tax cut over the same 7 years. The new Republican majority will double the monthly premium for Medicare recipients and eliminate their choice of doctors under their plan.

It is a secret plan, because we do not know about it. It has been secret for the 8 months we have been here, almost 9. They want to cram that plan down our throats this coming week.

Mr. Speaker, let us have at least 30 days of public hearings. Let us listen to what our constituents want us to hear about their plan and let us make sure that we do not take away from seniors their choice of doctors and providers, because I know that is what that secret Republican plan will do.

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CONTINUING THE UNIQUE TREND

(Mrs. SEASTRAND asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SEASTRAND. Mr. Speaker, this fall we are going to continue a unique trend that began with the Contract With America. We, politicians, are going to keep our promises.

Before we go home, Republicans are going to insist on the following: A balanced budget that restores fiscal sanity to our country; a plan that saves Medicare for future generations; welfare reform, emphasizing work, family, and personal responsibility; and tax relief, so families can finance their dreams not the Government.

Mr. Speaker, this is not just the Republican agenda. It is the agenda of the American people. The people have demanded real change. This fall, we intend to deliver.

LET US WORK TOGETHER TO SAVE MEDICARE

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE. Mr. Speaker, to all of the seniors in the 18th Congressional District in Houston, let me thank you for 300-plus of you who joined me at my Town Hall meeting in August and said, "Absolutely not, absolutely not, to the false truths and false representations by the Republican majority on Medicare," and absolutely not to the proposed Medicare cuts.

Where is the Democratic plan? Our plan has been on the table for at least a year. National health reform is the appropriate plan that would provide reasonable health care to all Americans.

What is the truth? The truth is, yes, America, this program is not bankrupt. In 1970 the Medicare Program had a 2-year life. It has gone up to a 14-year life in the 1980's. The Medicare Program has today approximately a 7-year life.

Who has been able to save Medicare? Democrats. Who has been able to bash and ban Medicare? Republicans.

The truth is simply that we must get rid of fraud, we must get rid of abuse, but we should not force those who are taking care of elderly parents to choose between those parents and the children they have to educate. The Republican plan to cut Medicare should be exposed. I call for 4 weeks of hearings on this plan. President Truman tried to implement Medicare, but the Republicans said "no" then. America, do not let them say "no" today. Tell the Republicans, "No, let us work together to save Medicare without a wasteful \$245 billion tax cut for the wealthy."

FIX THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT

(Mr. CHRYSLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. CHRYSLER. Mr. Speaker, when I was elected to Congress, my constituents gave me clear, easy-to-understand instructions. My constituents fully understand that the policies that have come out of Congress since the 1960's have failed.

My instructions are clear: Fix the Federal Government.

That means cutting taxes. Why? Because money that the people earn belongs to them, not the Government.

Fixing the Federal Government means saving Medicare so that our grandparents and every American will have health care beyond the year 2002. It also means balancing the budget because there is absolutely no way we can sustain \$200 billion deficits forever.

And, finally, fixing Government means changing the failed welfare state. Too many families and too many people have been destroyed by a system that rewards dependence and self-destructive behavior.

We must work together in Washington and in the media to get things done for America and for the American taxpayer.

WHERE IS THE REPUBLICAN PLAN?

(Mr. SCHUMER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SCHUMER. Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, Speaker GINGRICH said that his plan to cut Medicare would cost seniors an added \$7 a month. By Monday, the Speaker said it would cost seniors \$10 a month. Yesterday, the Speaker acknowledged that it would cost seniors over \$30 a month. Today, the Wall Street Journal writes on top of \$32 a month, deductibles will go up by \$50, lab services by several hundred, and nursing home care, if you are in a nursing home or have a parent who is, will cost you several thousand dollars more each year.

It is no wonder we are calling for public-wide hearings on the secret Republican plan. If it is such a great plan, what are you folks afraid of? Why not tell America what it is? Let the seniors, the young people and everyone in between debate it, and we will see if your plan is the right way to go.

But, no, you are afraid. You are cutting, cutting, cutting, and that is why you do not want us to have hearings on your plan.

THE TRUTH ABOUT THE STUDENT LOAN PROGRAMS

(Mr. BALLENGER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BALLENGER. Mr. Speaker, the Washington political machine seems often to operate under shades of truth, as if the difference between truth and fabrication cannot be seen. This rule has never been more evident than in the President's recent comments about our student loan proposals. The use of misinformation is a cheap tool used by those in a defensive position with no valid arguments against the real truth.

If one sifts through the lies being spread about our work in the student loan area, one would clearly see that we are not waging a war against our Nations students nor are we planning to lessen educational opportunities for them. By eliminating the Direct Loan Program, a program with exaggerated savings and benefits, and making other adjustments in the student loan area, which will make loans available to students, we are able to ensure that no student will lose eligibility or access to college loans, keep the inschool interest subsidy, and maintain the current loan origination fee and interest rates on student loans. That is the plain and simple truth. And, because the truth is politically unpalatable to the President, he has chosen to create his own truth.

America's students deserve to get accurate and reliable information. I urge all of my colleagues, from both sides of the aisle, to get the accurate information on this important issue.

SHOW US THE DETAILS OF THE REPUBLICAN MEDICARE PLAN

(Mrs. SCHROEDER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, having this gray hair, I do not know a lot, but I know a few things. No. 1, I am very nervous when Republicans say we do not need to know the details of the Medicare plan, "Just trust us."

I happen to know the history. They have never been for Medicare before. I find it very interesting they have such a loving plan. We do not need to know the details; they will just bring it out, and we will vote for it.

I also know that the devil is usually in the details, and I also know it is pretty amazing; we are going to be asked to fast-forward and vote on it when even the Speaker of the House apparently does not know the details of his own plan. Thing about it, on Sunday, on national TV we were told it would be only \$7 a month. By yesterday it was up to \$32 a month. That is only 3 days. Heaven only knows what it is going to be today.

I do not think a plan for this serious an issue should come rolling out here and everybody be ordered to vote for it without reading it.

Take our blindfolds off. Show us the details.

KEEP THE FAITH: BALANCE THE BUDGET

(Mr. WHITE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WHITE. Mr. Speaker, I learned two lessons when I was home in August over the break. The first one is it is pretty easy to take yourself seriously, a little bit too seriously when you are in Congress.

I went home. My kids started calling me the "Honorable Dad." It took me a few days to realize they were only playing a joke on me.

The second lesson I learned is it is easy to forget why we came here. My constituents gave me a message, too. They said, "Keep the faith. Go back there and balance the budget just like you said you were going to do."

Mr. Speaker, that is exactly what I am going to do. I am not going to vote to raise the debt ceiling. I am not going to vote for a budget package or for reconciliation unless we have a program in place, binding law, that will balance the budget over 7 years.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to shut the Government down. I do not want a train wreck. But if that is what it takes to get the attention of this administration and balance the budget, that is exactly what we have to do.